



**Name of Property:** *President* (Riverboat) (withdrawal of designation)  
**City, State:** St. Elmo, Illinois  
**Significant Dates:** 1924-1978  
**NHL Criteria:** 1 and 4, Exception 8  
**NHL Theme:** II. Creating Social Institutions and Movements  
4. Recreational Activities  
V. Developing the American Economy  
3. Transportation and Communication  
**Previous Recognition:** 1989 National Historic Landmark  
**National Historic Context:** XII. Business  
L. Shipping and Transportation  
XIV. Transportation  
B. Ships, Boats, Lighthouses, and Other Structures

**NHL Significance:**

- The side-wheel river excursion steamboat *President* is the only remaining large Western Rivers side-wheel excursion boat. River excursion boats carried passengers on day outings, providing entertainment and pleasant diversions.
- When she was built in 1924 as *Cincinnati*, the boat was one of the last overnight packet boats, operating between Cincinnati and Louisville with occasional trips to New Orleans or Pittsburgh.

**Integrity:**

- At the time of its designation as an NHL, the *President* was docked in St. Louis, Missouri, serving as a local cruise ship. In 1990, it moved to Davenport, Iowa, and was



converted to a floating casino. In 1999, after it retired from duty permanently, it was moored briefly in Mississippi, Tennessee, and most recently, Illinois.

- During the spring of 2009, the *President* was dismantled at its mooring location in Alton, Illinois, and moved by truck to a temporary holding area in St. Elmo, Illinois. It took over 100 semi-trailer loads to transport the riverboat.
- The present owner plans to reassemble the boat on a small lake in St. Elmo for use as a hotel and conference center. It will be placed on concrete piers in a newly dug pit near the lake. The pit will be flooded after the reconstruction of the boat to give the illusion that the riverboat is floating on water.
- Earlier neglect, alterations to accommodate gambling, and the present actions taken to relocate the ship, have removed all aspects of integrity from this National Historic Landmark.

**Owner of Property:** David Campbell, Effingham, Illinois

**Acreage of Property:** Less than an acre.

**Origins of Nomination:** The original nomination was written as part of a National Historic Landmarks Maritime Theme Study. The withdrawal of designation was initiated by the NPS Midwestern Regional Office with the support of the Illinois State Historic Preservation Office.

**Potential for Positive Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:**

- Withdrawal of the NHL designation for the riverboat *President* would demonstrate that the NHL Program continually monitors the condition of National Historic Landmarks and



that the Secretary of the Interior is willing to remove those that no longer meet the program's criteria.

**Potential for Negative Public Response or Reflection on NHL Program:** None known.

**Landmarks Committee Comments:**

**Landmarks Committee Recommendation:** Withdrawal. Dr. Stevens moved, Dr. Odo seconded; unanimous approval.

**Public Comments Favoring Withdrawal of Designation (comments received as of 11/3/10):**  
David E. Campbell, Campbell 2005, LLC, Effingham, Illinois (owner)

**Advisory Board Recommendation:**